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FOREIGN AREA OFFICER PROGRAM

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This instruction implements Department of Defense (DOD) Directive 1315.17, *Service Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Programs*, February 22, 1997, by providing guidance for establishing and sustaining the Air Force FAO Program. The Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force for International Affairs (SAF/IA) directs policy.

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Chapter 1

FAO PROGRAM OVERVIEW

1.1. DOD and Air Force engagement strategies require personnel with global skills to support a broad range of political-military (pol-mil) assignments worldwide. The Air Force FAO Program will develop, maintain, and sustain a cadre of officers who possess:

1.1.1. Graduate-level education focusing on, but not limited to, the political, cultural, sociological, economic and geographic factors of specific foreign countries and regions, or duty experience in the foreign countries and regions in which they specialize;

1.1.2. Foreign language skill at the professional level in the predominant language used by the populations of the countries or regions in which they specialize, and;

1.1.3. Qualification in their primary career field.

1.2. The Air Force FAO Program contributes to key aspects of the Air Force mission by developing a cadre of qualified and experienced line officers who possess foreign language competency and regional expertise essential for effective interaction with foreign militaries and organizations. FAOs ensure productive engagement with partners and allies across the range of operations, including support of Air Force participation in contingency operations.

1.3. FAOs may serve recurrent assignments outside of their core specialty in support of pol-mil activities in the Defense AttachÈ System, Security Assistance Organizations, the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), the Department of State, the United Nations, the Joint Staff, the Air Staff, the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), combined and unified commands, major commands (MAJCOMs), the Personnel Exchange Program (PEP), the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA), and foreign military schools. Functional Managers retain assignment authority over a FAO's core specialty.

Chapter 2

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

2.1. The FAO Cadre. In developing and sustaining a FAO cadre, the Air Force FAO Program will emphasize selection of officers who are already proficient in a foreign language. For this reason, the Air Force FAO Program will be closely coordinated with efforts to meet an Air Force goal to ensure sufficient numbers of Air Force officers are proficient in languages needed to support US global interests and responsibilities.

2.1.1. The FAO development concept separates officers into three levels of skill development. (See Table 2.1.)

2.1.2. Level I - Language Skills Group: Level I represents all officers (line and non-line) with validated foreign language Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT) scores of 1/1 or higher. Line officers with foreign language skills are considered a primary resource for selection and assignment to FAO positions.

2.1.3. Level II - Entry Level FAO: Level II consists of line officers who are qualified in their primary career specialties and have met FAO criteria for area expertise and language skills. Line officers in the grades of O-3 through O-6 who meet the basic qualifications in paragraph 1.1 may apply for award of the AFSC 16F1 (Entry Level FAO). The FAO AFSC will be retained as a primary, secondary or tertiary AFSC throughout an officer's career.

2.1.4. Level III - Fully Qualified FAOs: Level III FAOs who have served at least 12 months in a FAO assignment are designated fully qualified and receive the 16F3 AFSC.

Table 2.1. Desired FAO Qualifications.

LEVEL ONE: Language Skills Pool

Academic Degree	Baccalaureate Degree
Foreign Language	1/1 DLPT, working towards 2/2 DLPT
In-Country Experience	Not required
Assignment History	Working in primary AFSC

LEVEL TWO: Entry-level FAO (Award 16F1 AFSC)

Academic Degree	Masters (Area Studies/International Relations)*
Foreign Language	Minor in foreign language or 2/2 on DLPT
In-Country Experience	Immersion training, regional or In-Country duty experience
Assignment History	Qualified in core specialty; preparing for first FAO assignment

LEVEL THREE: Fully Qualified FAO (Award 16F3 AFSC)

Academic Degree	Masters (Area Studies/International Relations)*
Foreign Language	3/3 on DLPT
In-Country Experience	Job-related In-Country assignment
Assignment History	Qualified in core specialty; FAO assignment

Note: *Must possess either advanced academic degree in area studies/international relations or significant in-country duty experience.

2.2. FAO Development Programs. FAO is a mid-career specialty. To minimize lengthy training programs and ensure program viability, skills development for FAOs should generally begin with pre-commissioning education and training and continue throughout an officer's career.

2.2.1. Pre-commissioning Recruitment Programs. USAFA and Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFROTC) will encourage recruitment of candidates with regional knowledge and language skills. The Officer Training School (OTS) and Academy of Military Science (AMS) accession program will seek candidates with foreign language skills, in-country experience, or academic studies with a regional focus.

2.2.2. Pre-commissioning Education and Training Programs. USAFA and AFROTC cadets will be encouraged to develop language and regional area expertise.

2.2.3. USAFA will maintain a rigorous academic area studies program. USAFA will maintain foreign language immersion and semester-abroad programs as funding allows.

2.2.4. AFROTC Scholarship Programs. AFROTC will offer academic scholarships in foreign area studies programs and foreign language majors as funding allows. Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT) evaluates academic foreign area studies programs for suitability for AFROTC scholarships. Suitable degrees under this program may include Foreign Area Studies and Foreign Languages.

2.2.4.1. Degrees in Foreign Area Studies Programs. Foreign area studies are defined as programs of comprehensive study of the aspects of a world area's society or societies, including history, culture, economy, politics, international relations, and languages. Foreign area studies focus on a single country or on a world area (such as East Asia, Africa, or the Middle East) and offer instruction in those inter-disciplinary fields necessary to provide a full understanding of the country or area. They also concentrate on the international aspects of contemporary issues or topics (such as international business or current events). Programs must offer interdisciplinary courses such as political-science, history, sociology, and economics. Offers in foreign area studies will include a degree requirement for a foreign language minor in the principle language or languages of that country or area, or a minimum of two years of foreign language study.

2.2.4.2. Degrees in Foreign Language. Foreign language degree programs must be from an accredited college or university having a formal crosstown or consortium agreement with AFROTC. AFIT academic major evaluation is not required for these programs.

2.2.5. FAO Qualification Training Programs. FAO training should generally consist of Advanced Academic Degree (AAD) from a graduate school with a recognized foreign area studies program and language training either through the Defense Language Institute (DLI) or another approved training program. AFIT, USAFA, and AFROTC establish a limited number of post-graduate scholarship programs which fulfill FAO academic requirements. In addition, the Tuition Assistance program may fund AADs and language study. In-country language immersion and area studies may be offered to qualified candidates as availability and funding allow. Options also exist for FAO qualification through in-country experience in lieu of AAD in accredited area studies programs.

2.2.5.1. Air Force sponsorship of DLI programs will continue, as appropriate. Officers selected for foreign area studies under AFIT will receive language training at DLI or as coordinated by the FAO Proponent Office.

2.2.5.2. The FAO Proponent Office will monitor USAF officer attendance at foreign Professional Military Education (PME) programs. Officers who attend foreign PME will generally be designated FAOs upon completion of school.

2.3. Maintaining and Sustaining the FAO Cadre. Officers awarded a 16F AFSC should anticipate recurrent assignments in FAO positions when not serving in their primary career track. Exceptions will be coordinated and approved by functional managers.

2.3.1. Maintenance of language proficiency is an individual responsibility. Officers may apply for Foreign Language Proficiency Pay (FLPP) in accordance with AFI 36-2605, *Air Force Military Personnel Testing System*. In addition to language skills, FAOs must maintain currency in the political military situation of their regions as well as the U.S. political, economic, and military objectives within their region.SSAF-IA

2.3.2. Officers with language skills may be offered opportunities to maintain and improve those skills as availability and funding allow. The FAO Proponent Office will develop programs for MAJCOMS and individuals to sustain and enhance basic skills. To facilitate language learning and maintenance, the FAO Proponent Office will:

2.3.2.1. Provide online training information through the FAO website (<http://www.hq.af.mil/af/saf/ia/afaa/fao>);

2.3.2.2. Manage an Air Force Language and Area Studies Immersion Program, selecting officers to participate in short-duration, intensive, in-country language training at the appropriate career progression points; and,

2.3.2.3. Offer training opportunities to MAJCOM staffs with FAO and Language Designated Position (LDP) billets.

2.3.3. Installation Education Services offices will assist individuals in FAO studies programs by providing access to language centers, national databases, and online courses for language maintenance. Tuition Assistance will be approved for language courses providing funds are available.

2.3.3.1. The FAO Proponent Office, in coordination with USAFA Department of Foreign Languages, will assist the Education Services offices in establishing and maintaining language maintenance programs.

2.4. Identifying and Tracking the Officer Language Skills. The Air Force FAO Proponent Office identifies and tracks officer language skills for FAOs and potential FAOs. This information is used to support officer foreign language maintenance programs and recruit qualified individuals for FAO positions.

2.4.1. Air Force officer accessions programs offer the opportunity to identify and report foreign language skills during in-processing. Officers establish foreign language skills through the DLPT. All officers interested in the FAO program should schedule themselves for the Defense Language Aptitude Battery (DLAB) test. All colonel selectees are required to take the DLAB.

2.4.2. AFPC maintains a database that includes Foreign Language Self-Assessment (FLSA), DLPT, and other pertinent information in order to source candidates for contingency operations and assignment actions. The FLSA and DLPT databases are made available to the FAO Proponent Office to assist in scheduling language skills enhancement training.

2.4.3. The FAO Proponent Office will encourage Air Force officers who have self-reported language skills in key regional areas or low-density foreign language groups to validate their language proficiency through the DLPT. Language testing is voluntary.

Chapter 3

FAO PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

3.1. FAO Proponent Office.

3.1.1. The Deputy Undersecretary of the Air Force for International Affairs has established an Air Force FAO Proponent Office within the Air Force Attache Affairs Office (AFAAO). The AF FAO Proponent Office will:

- 3.1.1.1. Serve as the Air Force focal point and functional manager for the FAO, AFSC 16F, career specialty.
- 3.1.1.2. Validate USAF FAO and FAO LDP billets.
- 3.1.1.3. Manage USAF non-AFSC officer language training requirements.
- 3.1.1.4. Manage the FAO database using information provided by AFPC.
- 3.1.1.5. Act as OPR for Program Budget System Biennial and Program Objective Memorandum (POM) for FAO and non-AFSC officer language skills programs.
- 3.1.1.6. Manage FAO language proficiency requirements.
- 3.1.1.7. Manage Air Force Language and Area Studies Immersion Program.
- 3.1.1.8. Act as focal point for FAO issues with OSD, Air Staff, and other Agencies.
- 3.1.1.9. Act as Academic Specialty Monitor (ASM) for area studies.
- 3.1.1.10. Report on FAO and Language Proficiency Program to HQ USAF/CC annually.
- 3.1.1.11. Evaluate and select candidates for inclusion into the FAO program.
- 3.1.1.12. Facilitate the FAO Integrated Process Team (IPT).

3.2. FAO IPT and FAO Working Group.

3.2.1. The FAO IPT will facilitate planning, programming, and coordination for FAO and officer foreign language programs, issues, and initiatives. The IPT will transition into a working group once the FAO concept has been fully developed and coordinated. The working group will concentrate on implementation of FAO policy and plans.

3.2.2. Appropriate staff representatives from Secretary of the Air Force, Headquarters Air Force (DPX, DPP, XOI, XOO, XPM, RE), AFPC, Air National Guard Readiness Center (MPPSO, MPPAO, MPT), Air Force Recruiting Center, United States Air Force Academy, Air Force Reserve Officer Training Command will attend the IPT.

3.2.3. The Director, Air Force Attache Affairs Office, will chair the FAO IPT/FAO Working Group and call meetings at least semi-annually.

3.3. Personnel Management for the FAO Program.

3.3.1. In support of the FAO program, AFPC will:

- 3.3.1.1. Maintain personnel data systems for the FAO program to include AFSC, FLSA, and DLPT results.

3.3.1.2. Manage Officer Assignment Selection (OAS) for FAO billets.

3.3.2. Servicing Military Personnel Flights will administer DLPT and DLAB tests in accordance with guidance in AFI 36-2605, *Air Force Military Personnel Testing System*.

3.3.3. Officer accession points (AFROTC, USAFA, and OTS) will administer the FLSA to all newly accessed officers and update the results in the Personnel Data System (PDS). If an accession point is incapable of updating the PDS, then the Military Personnel Flight at the officer's first assignment will update the PDS.

3.4. Individual Responsibilities. Officers who wish to be considered for entry level 16F AFSC designation may apply through the FAO bulletin board which is accessible through the AFPC web page (currently located at: <http://www.hq.af.mil/af/saf/ia/afao/fao>). Qualified officers may apply for FAO positions advertised on the AFPC bulletin board through standard AF OAS procedures.

Chapter 4

AREA STUDIES ADVANCED ACADEMIC DEGREE PROGRAM

4.1. General. The AFIT Area Studies Advanced Academic Degree (ASAAD) program provides the basis for the FAO accreditation program. Graduate studies that focus on foreign regions and include language training provide the fundamental expertise required to support Air Force and DoD international missions. ASAAD programs will include language training at civilian institutes with credible area studies programs, at DLI, or at an alternate institution.

4.2. FAO Proponent Office. As the FAO program manager, SAF/IA(AFAAO) will:

- 4.2.1. Consolidate annual MAJCOM and other Air Force ASAAD quotas in coordination with using agencies.
- 4.2.2. Recommend candidates for selection to the ASAAD program.
- 4.2.3. Maintain liaison with AFIT/CI on area studies academic programs.
- 4.2.4. Confer with functional sponsors and the AFPC liaison office on the selection, training, and assignment of graduates.
- 4.2.5. Establish policy and procedures for FAO ASAAD.
- 4.2.6. Review all AF Forms 1779, *Request to Establish/Change Advanced Academic Degree Position*.
- 4.2.7. Review and monitor all administrative and operational aspects of academic, in-country, and foreign language training for FAOs.
- 4.2.8. Coordinate with functional managers to arrange in-country training.
- 4.2.9. Monitor FAO officers in coordination with the core functional managers and AFPC.
- 4.2.10. Coordinate language support under the Defense Foreign Language Program with AF/XOI.

4.3. Using Agency. All Unified Commands, Joint Agencies, MAJCOMs, Air Staff, and other organizations must ensure FAO, ASAAD, and LDP billets are validated and properly coded in the command manpower data system and the unit manning document. MAJCOMs will:

- 4.3.1. Designate FAO positions that require ASAAD and language skills.
- 4.3.2. Establish annual AFIT foreign area specialist graduate education requirements in coordination with the FAO Proponent Office. Confer with assignment officers on the selection, training, and assignment of FAO officers.
- 4.3.3. Assume administrative and operational responsibility for all FAO officers within their functional control.
- 4.3.4. Coordinate with FAO Proponent Office on career progression and training opportunities for FAOs.

4.4. Air Force Personnel Center.

- 4.4.1. The AFPC Special Duty Assignments office reviews each AFIT ASAAD application for availability and qualifications.
- 4.4.2. AFPC notifies academically qualified and available applicants of selection as an AFIT candidate.
- 4.4.3. AFPC schedules selected applicants for foreign language and area studies training in conjunction with the AFIT program.

4.5. Applicant. An officer interested in the AFIT ASAAD may apply through the AFPC bulletin board.

4.6. Air Force Institute of Technology. As the Academic Program Manager and Evaluating Agency, AFIT:

- 4.6.1. Works with the FAO Proponent Office to determine area studies program requirements.
- 4.6.2. Establishes the academic eligibility standards for entry into the AFIT ASAAD program.
- 4.6.3. Evaluates the academic eligibility of each ASAAD applicant.
- 4.6.4. Assigns selectees to the applicable school, monitors academic progress, provides administrative support, and acts as the student's point of contact while in the education program.
- 4.6.5. Provides AFPC information on the award of an Academic Specialty Code (ASC).

MICHAEL E. RYAN, General, USAF
Chief of Staff

Attachment 1**GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION*****References***

DODD 1315.17, *Service Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Programs*

DODD 5160.41, *Defense Language Program*

AFPD 16-1, *International Affairs*

AFJI 14-107, *Management of the Defense Foreign Language Program*

AFI 36-2605, *Air Force Military Personnel Testing System*

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AAD—Advanced Academic Degree

AFAAO—Air Force AttachÈ Affairs Office

AFIT—Air Force Institute of Technology

AFPC—Air Force Personnel Center

AFSC—Air Force Specialty Code

AFROTC—Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps

ASAAD—Area Studies Advanced Academic Degree

ASC—Academic Specialty Code

ASM—Academic Specialty Monitor

BPPBS—Biennial Planning and Programming Budget System

DAO—Defense AttachÈ Office

DIA—Defense Intelligence Agency

DLI—Defense Language Institute

DLPT—Defense Language Proficiency Test

DOD—Department of Defense

FAO—Foreign Area Officer

FASP—Foreign Area Studies Program

FLPP—Foreign Language Proficiency Pay

FLSA—Foreign Language Self-Assessment

HQ AFRC/DP—Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command, Director of Personnel

IPT—Integrated Process Team

LDP—Language Designated Position

MAJCOM—Major Command

NGB/DP—National Guard Bureau, Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel

OAS—Officer Assignment Selection

OPR—Office of Primary Responsibility

OSD—Office of the Secretary of Defense

OSI—Office of Special Investigation

OTS—Officer Training School

PEP—Personnel Exchange Program

pol-mil—Political-Military (Affairs)

POM—Program Objective Memorandum

PDS—Personnel Data System

SAF/IA—Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force for International Affairs

USAF/DP—Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, Air Force Headquarters

USAF/XOI—Director of Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance, Air Force Headquarters

USAFA—United States Air Force Academy

Attachment 2
FAO TRACK

Figure A2.1. FAO Track.

